

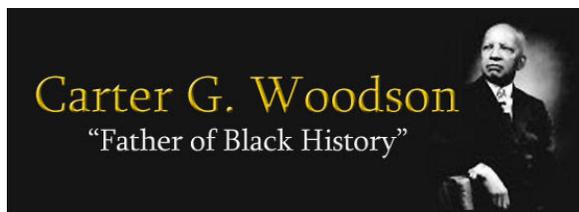
*Together in Ministry*



## February 2021 Newsletter



*February is Black History Month*



Historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the son of freed slaves, was concerned that Black children were not being taught about their ancestors' accomplishments in school. In 1926, he and his organization, the Association for the Study of Negro Life, announced that the second week of February would be set aside as Negro History Week. This week includes both President Lincoln's birthday (2/12) as well as Frederick Douglass's birthday (2/14).

Fifty years later, under President Gerald R. Ford, the celebration was expanded to encompass the entire month of February and became known as Black History Month. President Ford urged Americans to, "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

*From: "Bright Star Community Outreach, Inc."*

*A prayer for such a time as this:*

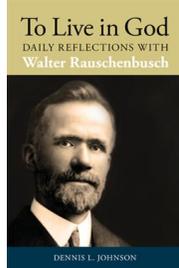
### **Lord, Lord, Open Unto Me**

Open unto me, light for my darkness  
Open unto me, courage for my fear  
Open unto me, hope for my despair  
Open unto me, peace for my turmoil  
Open unto me, joy for my sorrow  
Open unto me, strength for my weakness  
Open unto me, wisdom for my confusion  
Open unto me, forgiveness for my sins  
Open unto me, tenderness for my toughness  
Open unto me, love for my hates

Open unto me, Thy Self for myself  
Lord, Lord, open unto me!

- Howard Thurman, from "Meditations of the Heart"

## National Update



### On the Road with Rauschenbusch:

Currently, 35 person, mostly American Baptist clergy, are part of the pilgrimage walking daily with Rauschenbusch. Of that cohort there are four smaller Circles of Spiritual Companions that have formed for support and encouragement along the way.

If you are interested in being part of our monthly gathering - last Wednesday of each month at 1:30 pm (Eastern Time), let me know.

Peace and Goodness,

Randolph Miller  
[rtmiller77@gmail.com](mailto:rtmiller77@gmail.com)



### MC LIVE WEBINARS

TOGETHER IN MINISTRY - CELEBRATING &  
NURTURING CLERGY GROUPS

Thursday, February 18  
8pm Eastern/7pm Central/5pm Pacific

Join Rev. Lin Story-Bunce, our national Together in Ministry Coordinator, to hear testimonies and best practices for TiM Groups, and to explore your own joining or forming of one. Learn about national support available, including small grants.

Zoom info [HERE](#)

We want your feedback on MC Live! Watch for upcoming "Special Edition" newsletter with a simple survey for our readers.

## TOGETHER IN MINISTRY GROUPS

### An Introduction to Lin Story-Bunce and our Together in Ministry (TiM) Groups



Greetings! My name is Lin Story-Bunce and I will serve these next few years as the direct contact for our Together in Ministry Groups. I am so grateful for the warm welcome I have received from the Leadership Team and The Ministers Council community as a whole over the past few months. I am delighted to be part of this community and I am especially excited to build on the exceptional work of Rev. Dan Hopkins with our Clergy Covenant Groups/TiM (Together in Ministry) Groups.

I currently serve as Associate Pastor of a wonderful congregation of thoughtful folks in Greensboro, NC. I have ministered to and alongside this community for 11 years, and have found over that time that my own health and growth, and the health and growth of our ministry together, has been made possible through my committed involvement small group much like the TIM groups offered through The Ministers Council. These groups provide support, accountability, creativity, encouragement, and insight that enhance my own

experiences and understandings, but that also inevitably spill over into our community as well.

[Read More](#)

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## **A COVENANT JOURNEY- LENTEN PRAYER & STUDY SESSIONS**

Tuesdays, 9am-9:30am (Prayer) and 7:30pm- 8:15pm(Study/Reflection)  
February 23-March 30, 2021

Join Revs. Rebecca Driscoll, Scotty Robertson and Jacki Belile for these special times set aside for prayer, study and connection. Tuesday mornings will be a guided prayer experience on the theme of covenant, utilizing lectio divina. Led by Rebecca and Jacki. Tuesday evening study-chats will be led by Scotty. Together, we will explore the covenants and promises that God makes with God's people from the Hebrew Scripture. As we journey together toward Easter, may we be formed as the people of God today who are ready to receive the Covenant promises of God at work in our lives.

[More Information](#)

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## **HONORING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY:**

Our Honor Roll is Growing

We launched a new spiritual practice program in the Fall 2020 -- honoring those mentors and companions who have enriched and supported our ministry development through their examples. We invite you to name these and to consider a generous gift to the Ministers Council in their honor/memory. All gifts collected will be used to encourage ministry competence, collegiality, and centeredness through the [Excellence in Ministry Fund](#).

Our honor roll is growing! For more info and to give, click [here](#).

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## **"WE BELONG TO EACH OTHER"**

A Theology of Dues?

Our beloved Chicago-area minister and mentor, Rev. Dr. Alan V. Ragland, said this at a Ministers Council dinner some years ago: "We belong to each other." He was speaking to the depths of ministers among ministers, ministers *serv*ing ministers.



A sense of belonging and shared commitment ideally animates all we do for excellence in ministry. Ideally, this belonging undergirds our desires to share and receive resources, to grow in wisdom, courage and compassion as leaders, to offer mutual guidance and accountability. Ideally, these bonds inspire us to share our time, talent and treasure in the variety of settings we are called to lead collaboratively, including the Ministers Council as one organizational form God still uses for blessing.

We're receiving dues now for the 2021 calendar. You can pay these affordable dues (on a sliding scale) conveniently online at [www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com) or through your local treasurer. Let's dedicate ourselves with renewed passion for this common work, for such a time as this!

Rev. Jacki Belile, CPC Vice-President  
Ministers Council ABCUSA

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**Prayers and Milestones**

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Let us pray for Myanmar,  
for mercy for the NLD leaders who are detained;  
for the government – that they have the courage to defend principles of  
democracy, freedom, the rule of law and human rights for all people;  
for those crushed by poverty in rural areas where the price of rice is rising;  
for all who do not have access to telephones for simple communication;  
for an end to the pandemic.  
Through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Lord God, we lift before you our nation in this divided time. May those who hold power do their work in a spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice. Help them use their authority to serve faithfully and to promote our common life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

[Resources for such a time as this.](#)

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Do you have prayer requests or milestones to share? Submit by the 25th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

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## Chapter News

**Representatives of our active chapters** meet regularly for devotional time, event announcements, sharing of chapter challenges and best practices, and learning about national Ministers Council programs. Going forward, the representatives will meet bi-monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, from 3:30pm-5pm (next meeting March 16th). For more information contact Coordinator Rev. Atula Jamir, Ph.D. at [jamiratula@yahoo.com](mailto:jamiratula@yahoo.com).

[Chapter news includes reports from seven Chapters](#)

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## Share your Chapter News

Our local MC Chapters are the foundation of the organization! Let us know your events, best practices, and ideas so that we can share them across ABC USA. Send your news by contacting the Ministers Council phone: (610)314-7837 or by email: [info@ministerscouncil.com](mailto:info@ministerscouncil.com)

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## CODE OF ETHICS

As reported in the December newsletter, a final revision of the Covenant and Code of Ethics was approved on November 19, 2020 at the Biannual Business Meeting of the Chapter Representatives and members of the Leadership Team. The next step is the ratification by 2/3 of our Active Chapters over the course of 2021. Please help us ensure each chapter is setting aside time for these deliberations. Members of the national team will continue to be available for presentation and "Q and A."

Also, we are establishing the editorial team for 2021 revisions to the current Learning Guide. (While ratification decisions are underway, we'll start on introductory sections and those not affected by the changes.) We seek a diverse and interdisciplinary team for this learning journey. To volunteer, contact Jacki Belile, National Vice-President, at [jacki@livingwellministries.net](mailto:jacki@livingwellministries.net) by February 28, 2021. To review the approved document, visit [www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com) or email [info@ministerscouncil.com](mailto:info@ministerscouncil.com).

## Staff Reflection

### National and Local Chapter Membership

*A Word from Lisa*

**Join or renew your national and local chapter**

**membership today!**

This month Lisa shares this [membership renewal reminder](#).



## Members' Moments

Sharing our Perspectives, Passions and Proclamation with Each Other

We welcome the variety of perspectives of our members. Members' contributions to this new column are encouraged, as we acknowledge the expressions of our concerns, lessons and commitments to be of potential benefit to the wider community of ministers. Assumptions and statements made by contributors represent their particular views and do not represent, unless explicitly stated, the formal positions of the Ministers Council ABCUSA.

### Martin Luther King: Message to Youth

by Rev. Luis G. Collazo Torres, PHD

*"The struggle for civil rights, justice, peace, and freedom will always take effect. We must adopt a perpetual vocation for a culture of peace, tenderness, and justice." Read more from Rev. Luis Collazo Torres, Ph.D. , President of Puerto Rico Chapter, [here](#).*

## ABC Announcements

**The keynote speakers for the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit.** Rev. Dr. Winterbourne LaPucelle Harrison Jones will address attendees on Friday Evening, June 25, and Rev. Dr. Briana Parker on Saturday Evening, June 26. The 2021 Biennial Mission Summit: An Online Experience will meet June 24-26, 2021, with access to pre-recorded sessions, resources, and the virtual exhibit hall. The event opens with a Welcome Session on June 24 followed by meetings of the various American Baptist Caucuses, and the first of three worship services which will feature a communion service lifting up our American Baptist family and reflections by members of the National Executive Council on "Silver Linings During the Pandemic."

[Click to read more](#)

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) announces the launch of its **America for Christ (AFC) Offering 2021**, "For the Purpose of Equipping Saints." Based on Ephesians 4:11-13, the theme focuses on ABHMS ministries that empower disciples and equip leaders. Contributions to AFC allow ABHMS to provide needed support to communities throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

[Click to read more](#)

**PASTORAL OPENING, Barrington, IL**

Read the Congregation's profile [HERE](#)

## Reminders



#### **How to reach us:**

- By phone: (610)314-7837
- By email:  
info@ministerscouncil.com
- Address: 221 S. High  
Street, West Chester, PA  
19382
- We can generally be  
reached in the office on  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
(emails and voicemails will  
be responded to during this  
time)

#### **Stay connected**

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home page of the website
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